

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7246

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MY BX

SUBJ: BRUNEI PEOPLES PARTY AND ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 2904

B. KUALA LUMPUR 2850

C. FBIS BANGKOK 191546Z JUNE 1974

1. SUMMARY: NEWLY RECONSTITUTED BRUNEI PEOPLES PARTY (BPP) HAS ASKED TO BE INCLUDED IN ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE AND URGES THAT CONFERENCE CALL UPON BRITISH TO GRANT "INDEPENDENCE" TO BRUNEI. GOM JUNE 19 SAID THAT BPP CANNOT SET UP OFFICE IN MALAYSIA AND THAT POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY EX-BRUNEI POLITICAL PRISONERS IS CONTRARY TO TERMS OF THEIR ASYLUM. BRITISH ARE UNDERSTANDABLY DISCOMFITED BY WHOLE AFFAIR BUT AT SAME

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TIME ARE RELIEVED BY STAND TAKEN BY GOM. END SUMMARY.

2. BRUNEI PEOPLES' PARTY (BPP) ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN ZAINI HAJI AHMAD HELD PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 19 IN WHICH HE PETITIONED FOR ADMISSION OF BPP TO ISLAMIC FONMINS' CONFERENCE. ZAINI CLAIMED THAT BPP REPRESENTS 120,000 MUSLIMS IN BRUNEI AND ASKED THAT CONF PASS RESOLUTION CALLING UPON BRITAIN TO GRANT "INDEPENDENCE" TO PRO-TECTORATE. IN MEMORANDUM TO GOM FOREIGN MINISTRY, ZAINI (WHO ALSO CALLED HIMSELF ACTING PRESIDENT OF BPP ACCORDING FBIS REPORT REF C) ASKED FOR SAME STATUS ACCORDED TO PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO). ACKNOWLEDGED GOAL OF BPP IS TO OVERTHROW SULTAN AND, ACCORDING AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE REPORT QUOTED REF C, HAS BEEN ENLISTING SUPPORT OF LOCAL MUSLIMS TO THIS END. ISLAMIC CONF WAS ALSO URGED TO PRESSURE SULTAN OF BRUNEI TO RELEASE ABOUT 50 BPP FOLLOWERS STILL UNDER DETENTION THERE.

3. FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS SPOKESMAN SAID JUNE 19 THAT GOM "NOT AWARE OF ALLEGED ACTIVITIES" OF BPP AND THAT PARTY IS NOT REGISTERED IN MALAYSIA, THUS CANNOT SET UP OFFICE HERE, TEMPORARY OR OTHERWISE. SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID THAT POLITICAL ACTIVITY HERE BY EX-BRUNEI POLITICAL PRISONERS IS VIOLATION OF TERMS OF THEIR ASYLUM. FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT WAS FEATURED PROMINENTLY IN BOTH ENGLISH AND MALAY LANGUAGE PRESS, BUT ZAINI'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS NOT CARRIED IN DETAIL.

4. DCM MET WITH BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER GORDON JUNE 20. GORDON SAID THAT HIGH COMMISSION HAS NOT BEEN INSTRUCTED THUS FAR TO RAISE BPP AND ITS ISLAMIC FONMINS' CONF INITIATIVE WITH GOM, BUT INDICATED THAT HICOM IS RELIEVED BY POSITION TAKEN BY FOREIGN MINISTRY. GORDON ALSO INDICATED THAT HMG WOULD LIKELY FIND GOM DISCLAIMER SATISFACTORY. HE SPECULATED THAT GOM ITSELF MIGHT BE EMBARRASSED BY BPP ACTIVITY AND THAT GOM MAY IN FACT HAVE NOT KNOWN THAT BRUNEIANS WERE PLANNING TO REVIVE BPP. FURTHERMORE, GORDON VENTURED OPINION THAT BPP INITIATIVE TOOK PLACE AT THIS TIME BECAUSE OF OPPORTUNITY ATTRACT ATTENTION OF ISLAMIC MOVEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBLY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM LIBYANS AND PERHAPS OTHERS FOR ITS "LIBERATION" CAUSE.

5. FYI, AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMATIC SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT BPP "HEADQUARTERS" LOCATED IN PETALING JAYA, SUBURB OF K.L. ALSO, THERE CONFLICTING OPINION ON WHEREABOUTS OF AZAHARI, BPP CHAIRMAN: BRITISH CLAIM THAT HE IS STILL IN INDONESIA BUT AUSTRALIANS MAINTAIN HE HAS

ENTERED MALAYSIA. END FYI.

6. COMMENT: NEXT MOVE IN BRUNEI AFFAIR DEPENDS LARGELY ON THE GOM. WITHOUT ANY HARD EVIDENCE, WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT IF THE REAL RULER IN BRUNEI, THE VOLATILE SRI BEGAWAN, KEEPS HIS COOL THEN THE GOM MAY ELECT NOT TO GIVE (OR POSSIBLY NOT TO CONTINUE) SUPPORT TO THE BPP. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SITUATION CONTAINS THE INGREDIENTS FOR CONSIDERABLY HEIGHTENED TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

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